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KCPP ASSESSMENT PROVES ITSELF BENEFICIAL IN JAMESTOWN INCIDENT

Richmond, Ky. – One month after participating in the Kentucky Community Preparedness Program's Homeland Security assessment, a Kentucky community has already used the knowledge that it gained to guide it successfully through a potentially deadly event.

The Jamestown Police Department received a letter on Monday, March 28, threatening that it was laced with anthrax. The letter tested negative for the deadly chemical agent, and the FBI is investigating the incident.

Jamestown and its neighboring city of Russell Springs were the first two communities to go through the Kentucky Community Preparedness Program's threat assessment. KCPP assessment teams evaluated the safety of the two Russell County communities from February 21 to 25.

Acting Jamestown Police Chief Jeff Kerns said the knowledge and experience the community gained during the assessment process helped it through the crisis situation.

"We did not realize that these things would be put to the test so quickly," Kerns said. "The threat assessment was a great eye-opening experience. We had just gone through it in this county, and we felt that it helped us enormously during this situation."

The Kentucky Community Preparedness Program is the Department of Criminal Justice Training's homeland security initiative that strengthens the security of Kentucky.

"The Kentucky Community Preparedness Program is helping our Commonwealth's communities by providing them with the expertise and knowledge they need to better understand and evaluate their potential vulnerabilities," said Keith Hall, Kentucky's Director of Homeland Security. "The scenario that occurred last month in Jamestown can potentially happen anywhere in Kentucky, and this



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assessment is helping our communities become ready and prepared to mitigate and respond to threats of any kind.”

The program focuses on hostile acts and crime in small- and medium-sized communities through a system of risk assessments and recommendations for improved security.

“Incidents like the one that happened in Jamestown are exactly why the Department of Criminal Justice Training created the Kentucky Community Preparedness Program,” said DOCJT Commissioner John W. Bizzack. “Every city, whether it’s a booming metropolis in New York or a rural area of Kentucky, could become a victim of some form of terrorism, and the life of every citizen deserves to be protected as diligently as possible. Luckily, the officials in Jamestown recognized this and took the progressive step to go through the assessment process.”

One of the recommendations offered in Jamestown and Russell Springs was for agencies to hold joint training exercises between the local first responders in case of an emergency. The events of that day drove home the importance of that suggestion, as well as many of the others, Kerns said.

“We learned some hard lessons that day,” he said. “We are going to treat this as a great training exercise.”

The incident also increased the awareness that an attack could happen in any community.

“We’re probably one of the smallest towns in the state, if it can happen here, it can happen anywhere,” Kerns said. “I feel like every community in the state should go through the threat assessment, not just because of this incident, but because of everything it brought to our attention.”

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